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it is in the nature of free people to change their minds. Freedom is not static. In its very essence it is mobile. A free people seek the readiest practicable means of solving problems. Experience had demonstrated the impossibility of eradicating the evils of intemperance through state action. To grapple with it effectively, the power of the nation alone was adequate. Whether that power will prove effective or not may be doubtful, but no one could question the ineffectiveness of all previous action by the states. Hence the Eighteenth Amendment. Probably woman suffrage would have been realized gradually by state action alone. But the progress would have been slow. Its advocates saw in the successful campaign of the prohibitionists a demonstration that a shorter way lay through the process of constitutional amendment. They pressed forward over that way and the Nineteenth Amendment embodies their triumph. In many other respects, the established barriers between state and nation have been broken down through legislative action. The pure food laws and the statutes prohibiting the carriage of lottery tickets and of interstate transportation of women for immoral purposes, are examples of the successful exercise of national power in domains properly controlled by the police power of the states.

The effort at national regulation of the hours and conditions of labor of children, through the control of interstate commerce, is an example of an unsuccessful attempt to usurp state police regulation by national law.

Mr. Pierson discerns a changed attitude of our people towards the Constitution. He finds the principal explanation of this in the growth of national consciousness, due both to pressure from without and to developments within. Perhaps the most controlling cause for the changes noted may be found in the character of the state governments. Too often have these fallen into unworthy hands. State legislatures do not enjoy a high reputation. Local political machines too often control both the legislative and the executive arms of the state. Unwieldy as is the federal Congress, its acts are more closely observed than those of the state legislatures, and the presidential veto power is used with a high sense of public responsibility.

"What then is the future?" Mr. Pierson asks. "Is the Constitution hopelessly out of date? * * * The integrity of the States was a cardinal principle of our governmental scheme." No. The equilibrium between the states and the nation will be preserved in its essentials by the Supreme Court. Recent decisions, particularly the unanimous ruling of the Supreme Court in declaring the child labor law unconstitutional, have reaffirmed that security.

That question was in doubt when Mr. Pierson's book was prepared. It now has been settled. So long as the powers of that great tribunal remain unimpaired, the "indestructible union composed of indestructible States" will be secure. And, as Mr. Pierson says, "if leaders and teachers do their part, American intelligence and prudence will assert themselves, and the slogan of an awakened public sentiment may yet be: 'Back to the Constitution!'" The book very clearly presents the problems involved. It is clearly written and pregnant with intelligent suggestion. It touches upon problems which vitally affect our national welfare and amply justifies attentive perusal.

GEORGE W. WICKERSHAM.

New York City.

Latin-American Commercial Law. By T. E. Obregon. With the Collaboration of Edwin M. Borchard. New York, The Banks Law Publishing Co., 1921. pp. xxiii, 972.

Any work throwing light on the legal systems of our sister republics in Central or South America is certain of a cordial welcome in the United States. This is especially true of works dealing with the business law of Latin America. The commercial law of the individual Latin-American states has been accessible to us

in English for a number of years as part of "The Commercial Laws of the World." Because of the vastness of this collection, however, and the fact that it consisted in the main of a translation of the detailed provisions of the various commercial codes, it was difficult to obtain therefrom a comprehensive view of the outstanding features of Latin-American law as compared with those of our own law.

The present work is the first to give a general survey of the different departments of business law as contained in the Central and South American codes. In addition to this, the work discusses the rules of the conflict of laws as given in the civil codes and legal procedure. An introductory chapter is devoted to the sources of commercial law in each country and to the relationship existing between the commercial and civil codes; and another chapter, to the constitutional law of the different countries so far as it affects commercial law.

The work was written primarily as a text-book for students in American universities studying Latin-American commercial law, and, as such, it deserves much praise. The task, which was indeed a difficult one, in view of the vast amount of material to be covered, has been performed with rare skill. The author had the wisdom to leave out the unimportant and to confine his exposition to a discussion of the various systems followed by the different codes. He has given us, therefore, not only an outline of Latin-American commercial law, but of comparative commercial law as well. The work is written in an excellent style and shows throughout the hand of the accomplished scholar. Professor Obregon in his preface acknowledges the invaluable assistance received by him in the preparation of the work by Professor Edwin M. Borchard of the Yale Law Faculty.

From the standpoint of the American student the value of the work would have been enhanced considerably if it had set forth the Latin-American "business" law instead of the Latin-American "commercial" law in the technical sense. As it is, we are told nothing of the general principles governing the Latin-American law of contracts, and if a particular transaction is not "mercantile" and is controlled by the provisions of the Civil Code, we are not told what those provisions may be. For a proper understanding of the commercial law of any country having separate commercial codes, some knowledge of the rules of the civil code, so far as they relate to the subject matter under discussion, is indispensable.

E. G. LORENZEN.

Yale University School of Law.

Documents and Their Scientific Examination. By C. Ainsworth Mitchell. London, Charles Griffith & Company, 1922. pp. xii, 215.

This small volume deals largely with the chemistry involved in cases of suspected forgery, disputed handwriting, and questioned documents. It contains chapters dealing with the examination of the following: paper, pens and pen markings, inks, pencil pigments, copying-ink pencils and their pigments, handwriting, secret writing, typewriting and printing, stamps, seals, and envelopes and finger prints. Many of the illustrations are illuminating. At the end of each chapter is a valuable bibliography. The book is written chiefly for the use of the chemist and the expert examiner of documents. But it is of much value to the lawyer who has a case involving a disputed document. It will suggest numerous tests that may be applied to the instrument, with many of which he would ordinarily be unfamiliar. If he is so situated that an expert examiner of disputed documents is unavailable, he may be able, with the aid of this book and of a competent chemist and photographer, to subject the questioned document to a thorough examination. The value of the work to the lawyer might have been greatly increased by official citations to the cases mentioned, and by an accurate reference to other cases.

EDMUND M. MORGAN.

Yale University School of Law.